

FOUR VIEWS OF DUMMY



So, what is a hold for no-trumps? You cannot always have AQJT in the suit the opposition bids. Sometimes with Kxx, you have to play the whole hand trying to keep one opponent off lead. Then, there are lesser holds like 10872, even maybe 8652 when partner holds Q3 and you at least can slow down their trick-taking in the suit.

Did I mention 10872? A decent partner supplements with singleton K or that Q3 holding and all is well.

So, what would you bid after your left-hand opponent opens 1♠ and partner doubles...and right hand opponent is silent? You hold:

♠ T872 ♥ 872 ♦ KQ7 ♣ J32

Everyone's vulnerable. You can tell one of three mini-lies, either that you have 6-9 hcp with a spade hold, that you have four clubs or that you have 4 diamonds. I do not think I was alone in deciding to call 1NT, at least showing I held a few points. Surely that could not get me into too much trouble?

I remember saying those immortal words to myself as I made the bid. Within the next few seconds, I went through the full range of emotions as the bidding proceeded:

West	North	East	South
	1♠	x	Pass
1NT	x	xx	2♦
Pass ¹	3♠	x	Pass
?			

¹ with the greatest relief

Relief turned to despair. If I could not find a suit to bid at the two level, was there one that appealed two levels higher? How was my spade hold looking now? What made matters worse was that East was Michael Cornell who presumably had seen the vulnerability and whose spades figured to be just slightly better than mine!

I thought my best move would be to phone the airline with which I will be flying to the Northern Hemisphere in one week's time and advance my flight by a week. I wanted out, quick!

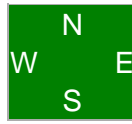
I passed. Trust partner. These strong action doubles usually work out. In a strange way, even this one almost did.

Board 10

East Deals
Both Vul

♠ 10 8 7 2
♥ 8 7 2
♦ K Q 7
♣ J 3 2

♠ —
♥ Q 6 5
♦ J 9 8 6 3 2
♣ 8 7 6 5



♠ A K Q J 6 5 4 3
♥ K J 3
♦ —
♣ 9 4

♠ 9
♥ A 10 9 4
♦ A 10 5 4
♣ A K Q 10

West	North	East	South
<i>Ashley Bach</i>	<i>Richard Solomon</i>	<i>Michael Cornell</i>	<i>Gary Chen</i>
		1 ♠	Dbl
Pass	1 NT	Dbl	Rdbl
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♠	Dbl
All pass			

I can now/could then tell the reaction of all four players when they saw Ashley's dummy, no trumps and nothing much to commend it other than one red queen.

Gary, South



Anticipation hoping to score four of his winners which together with my trump trick gives us a plus score.

Ashley, West

Annihilation maybe too strong a word but his expression was one of "are you really sure of what you are doing, partner?"



Richard, North



Resignation. The die is cast. How many winners can you cash, partner?

Michael, East

Elation. What a great partner, producing the one card which secures his contract and which by rights should be in South's hand, that ♥Q.



The play was swift. Three rounds of clubs saw Michael use one of his trumps. He then produced the ♠J, to tease and give me a micro-second's hope of partner producing a spade trick. When I could not even come up with 5 to the 10, Michael claimed his overtrick.

Although Michael was happy Ashley held the ♥Q, he might have scored better had Ashley not held it. Say Ashley had ♥10 instead? Now, Michael would still be making 9 tricks while all those in 4♠ would fail..and that would be a gain of 14imps.

As it was, Michael's prediction of a gain of 4 imps was spot on. At half the tables, including at the other table in our match, the contract was 4♠x, 790 as compared with 930.

No annihilation. Elation but only 4 imps. No resignation but there will be a couple of month's gap while I escape on that plane next week. Whoever said there was no emotion in Bridge. There was tons of it at this one table alone.

Richard Solomon